THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN HISTORY

702 BALLANTINE HALL INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47405

Tel. 812—335-3034

LEWIS PERRY
Editor (On leave)

B. EDWARD McCLELLAN
Acting Editor

DAVID R. HOTH
Acting Associate Editor

March 21, 1983

James H. Lesar
1000 Wilsen Blvd.
Suite 900
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Mr. Lesar:

I have now gone through your letter of February 7 and have examined both the Kurtz and Weisberg books.

I do understand the basis for your suspicions; the parallels are often close. At the same time, it is possible to conclude in each case that the two authors were drawing similar conclusions from the same documents. Where the language is parallel it is sometimes drawn from the documents themselves. Since Weisberg's works are mentioned in the bibliography, some attribution is clearly provided. In our judgment, the charge of "lifting material"--a very serious one in the academic world--is too strong.

I wonder if a slight rewording might not resolve the problem. Might you say, for example: "Its valid points derive from the very critics Kurtz deprecates. For example, Kurtz relies heavily on the work of Harold Weisberg and offers little information that Weisberg has not previously revealed." That wording--or something similar of your won choice--would make the point without imposing the burden of having to document plagiarism, which as I'm sure you know is difficult to do.

Let me know what you think.

Sincerely yours,

B. Edward McClellan

B. Edward McClellan
Acting Editor

BEM:smp